DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 316 334 RC 016 907

TITLE America's Agriculture: A Portrait of the Past and Present and Part-Time Farmers.
INSTITUTION Bureau of the Census (DOC), Suitland, Md.
REPORT NO AC86-PP-1; AG86-PP-3
PUB DATE Aug 86
NOTE 19p.
PUB TYPE Guides - Classroom Use - Materials (For Learner) (051)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Agricultural Education; Agricultural Occupations; *Agricultural Production; *Agriculture; Demography; *Farmers; Field Crops; *Part Time Farmers; Secondary Education; Vocational Education; *Young Farmer Education

ABSTRACT

These two booklets are useful as student materials in vocational agriculture classes. "A Portrait of the Past and Present" reports information on how U.S. crops have changed to conform to changing food preferences. The report also compares farm statistics from 1880 to 1982, noting a steady decrease in the percentage of U.S. population living on farms. The report offers information about minorities and women who operate farms in America, showing a general decrease in the number of farms operated by minorities from 1978 to 1982. The number of farms operated by women, however, showed a 7% increase. Eighty-nine percent of U.S. farms are family held. Small and large farms increased from 1978 to 1982 while the number of medium-sized farms (of 50 to 1,999 acres) decreased. "Part-Time Farmers" offers statistics about part-time farming in the United States. The report provides a statistical view of U.S. part-time farmers, the size of their acreage and product sales. There are numbers showing livestock inventories and the kinds of crops harvested by part-time farmers. The booklet also compares full- and part-time farms according to acreage, value of agricultural sales, value of equipment, and value of land and buildings. There is also a breakdown of the amounts of part-time acreage and sales according to U.S. region. Each booklet is brief and contains large print, pictures, graphs, and graphics. (TES)

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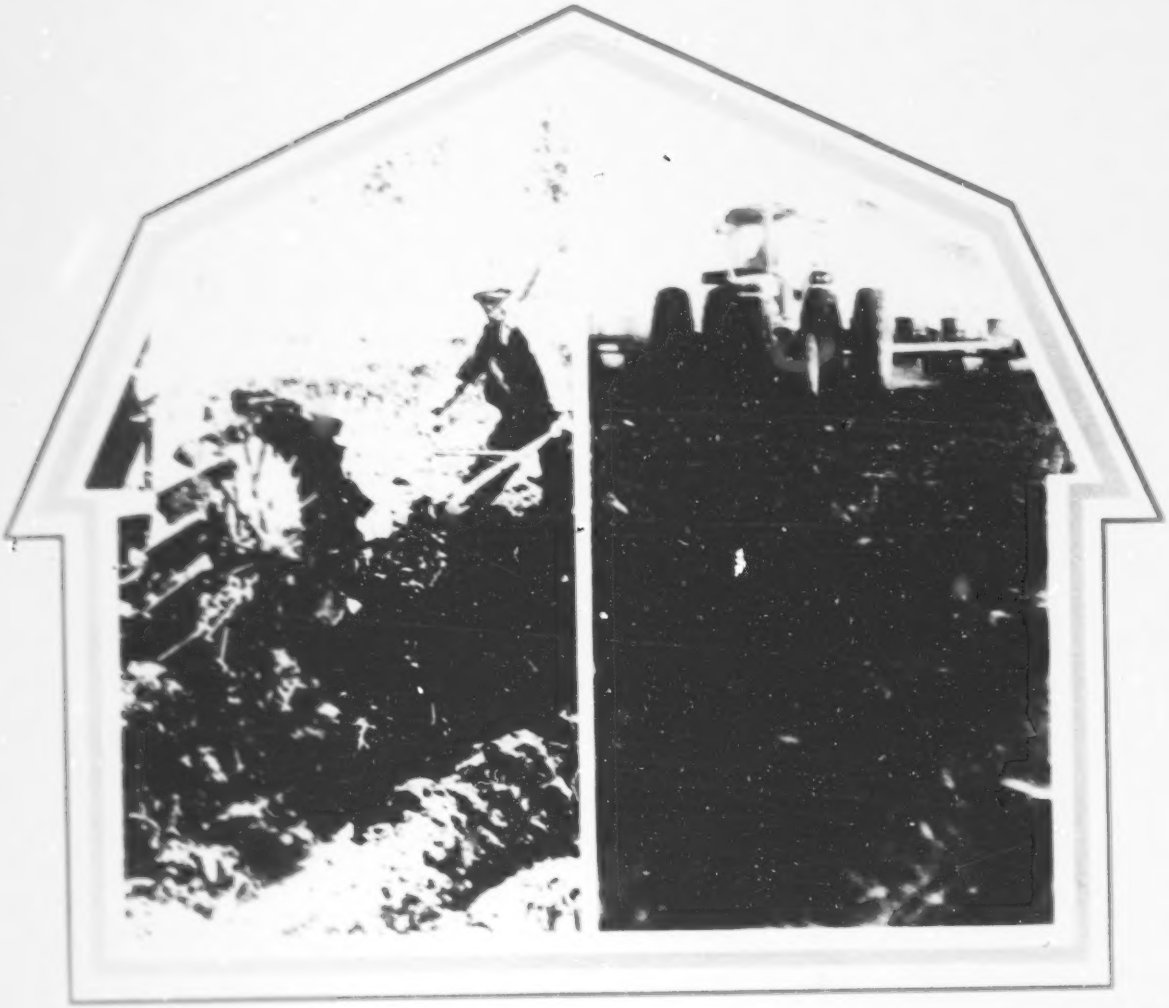
America's Agriculture

A Portrait of the Past and Present

AG86-PP-1



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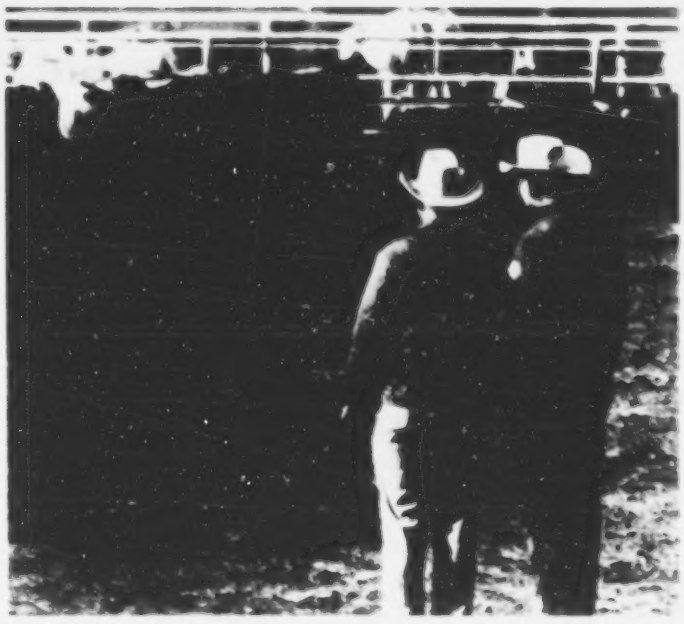
America's Agriculture: A Portrait of the Past and Present

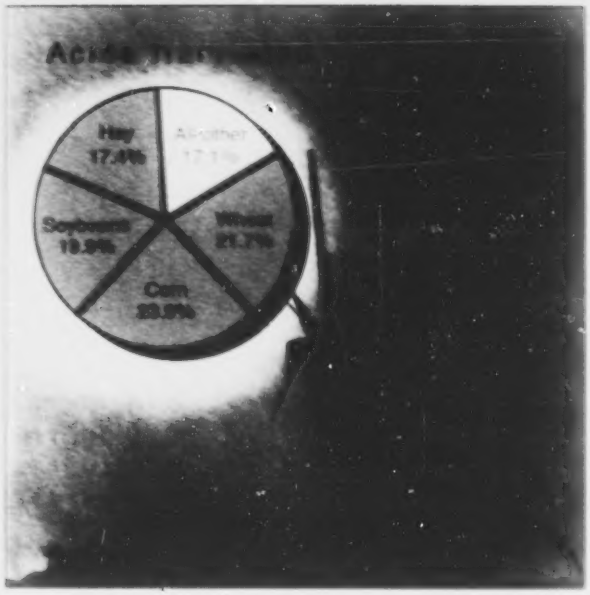
From the native Americans to the colonial settlers to the midwestern farmers and western ranchers, Americans have always understood the importance of the land.

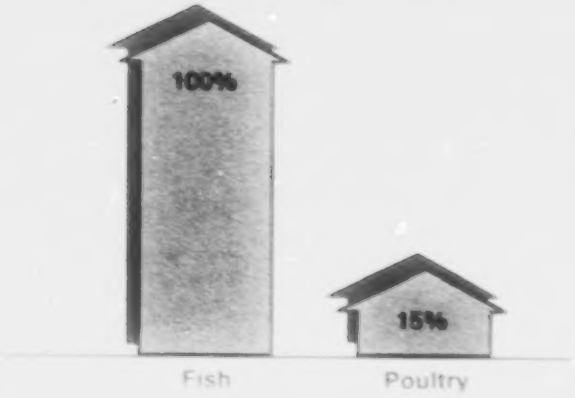
The land, nurturing crops and livestock, provides our sustenance. Over 40 percent of this Nation's land is devoted to farming and ranching.

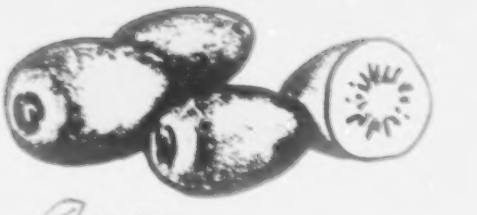
The census of agriculture has been collecting data on the land and the people who work it since 1840.

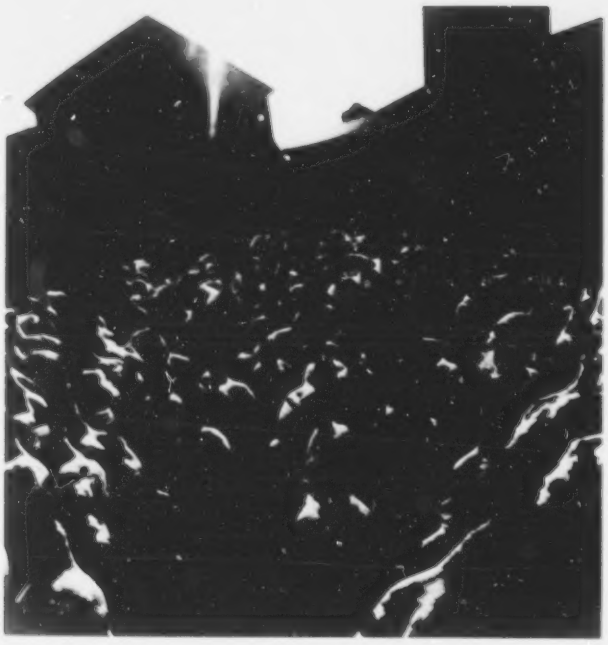


America's Changing Preferences





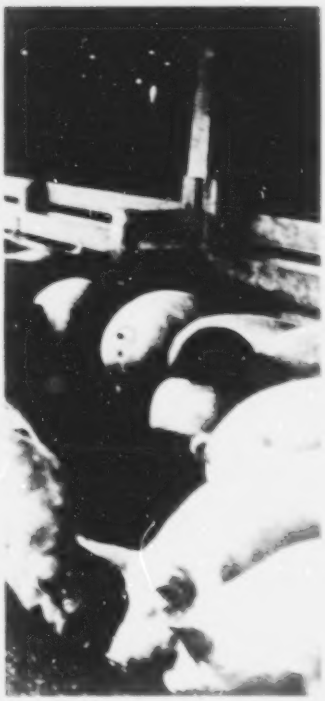


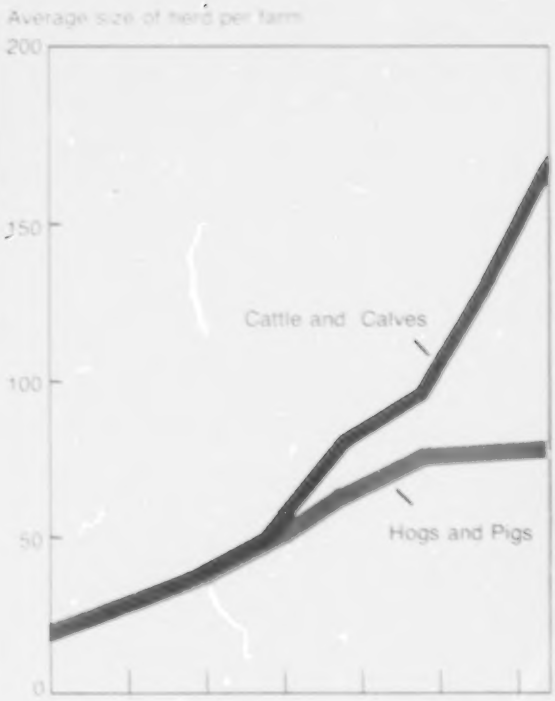


Where the Hogs Are

Where the Cattle Are

The number of hogs and pigs and cattle and calves per farm has steadily increased.





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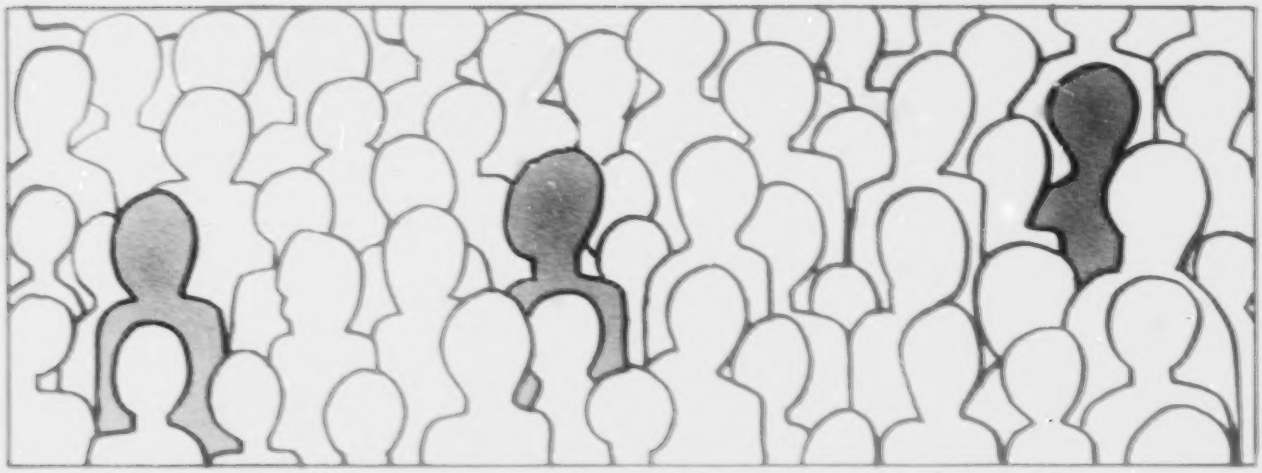
America's Changing Population

In 1880, 44 percent of the population lived on farms.

1880 Farm Profile

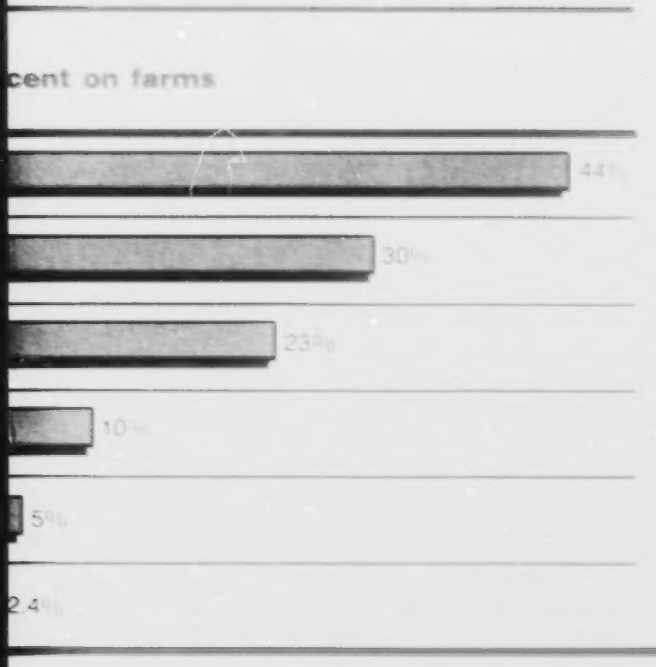
- 4.0 million farms
- 536 million acres
- Average size: 134 acres
- 100% family owned
- Average age of operator: 39.5 years
- Sold $2.2 billion of agricultural products
- Average sales: $552

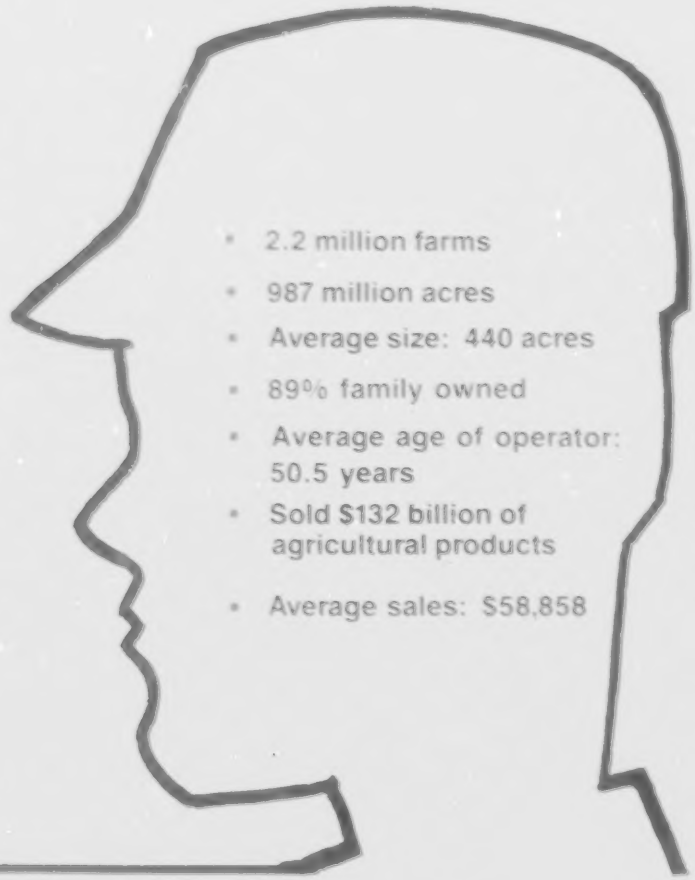
Year	Population	Per
1880	50,262,000	
1920	106,461,000	
1940	132,122,000	
1959	177,830,000	
1969	202,677,000	
1982	231,257,000	



By 1982, only about 3 percent lived on farms.

1982 Farm Profile





- 2.2 million farms
- 987 million acres
- Average size: 440 acres
- 89% family owned
- Average age of operator: 50.5 years
- Sold $132 billion of agricultural products
- Average sales: $58,858

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Minorities and Women Who Operate Farms in America

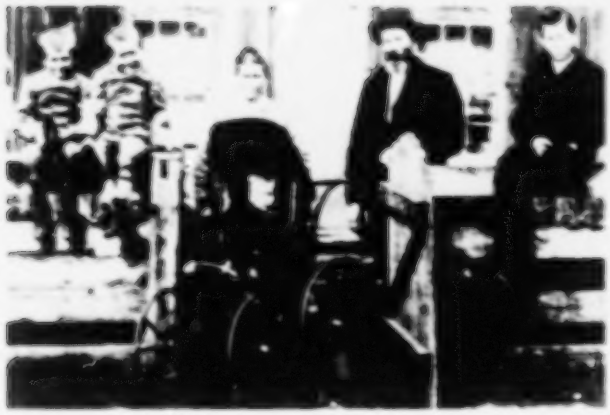
Farms operated by Blacks and other minority races dropped from 58,000 in 1978 to 54,000 in 1982. All the decline involved Black operators, mostly in the South.

The number of American Indian, Asian, and other minority operators all increased slightly between 1978 and 1982, mostly in the West.

Farms operated by persons of Spanish origin decreased by about 1,400 since 1978 to just over 16,000 in 1982.

Over 120,000 farms were operated by women in 1982, a 7-percent increase from 1978. Those farms represent 5 percent of all farms in number, but only 2 percent of products sold. Thirty percent of these farms had sales greater than $10,000. Thirty-two percent were operated by women 65 years of age and over.

America's Family Farms

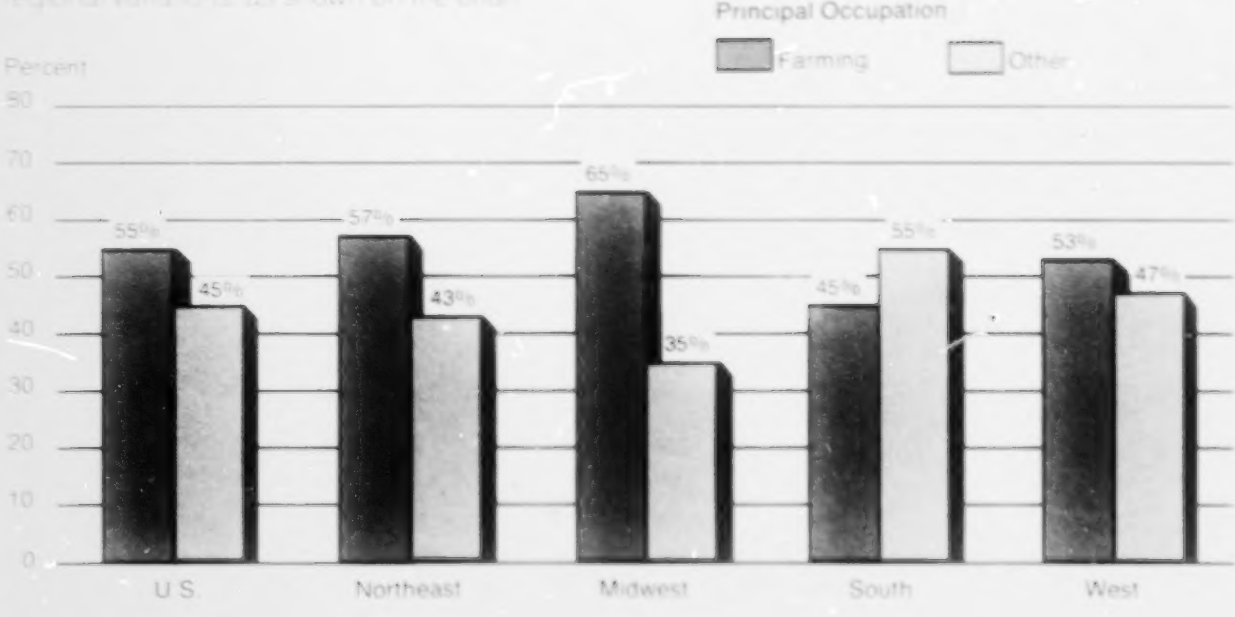


Through sociological, economical, and agricultural changes, one American tradition remains relatively constant – the family farm. A whopping 89 percent of our farms are family held. Even incorporated and partnership farms are basically family oriented. The chart below tells the story.

1969

1982

Farming is the principal occupation of 55 percent of all farm operators, but there are regional variations, as shown on the chart.



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The American Farm is Changing

From 1978 to 1982, the number of small and large farms increased, while medium-sized farms decreased.

The growing trend of small American "hobby" or part-time farmers has caused the number of horses, sheep, milk goats, rabbits, and bees to increase, especially on farms of less than 50 acres.

Census Bureau Mission

In its best interests, a civilized nation counts and profiles its people and institutions. Doing so ably and objectively is the abiding mission of the United States Census Bureau. We honor privacy, shun partisanship, resist scrutiny, and share our expertise globally. Striving to excel, we chronicle the Nation's past, describe its present, and illuminate its future.

Additional Info ation

For additional county, State, and national census data on agriculture, contact:

Agriculture Division
Bureau of the Census
U.S. Department of Commerce
Washington, D.C. 20233
(301) 763-7113

Issued August 1996

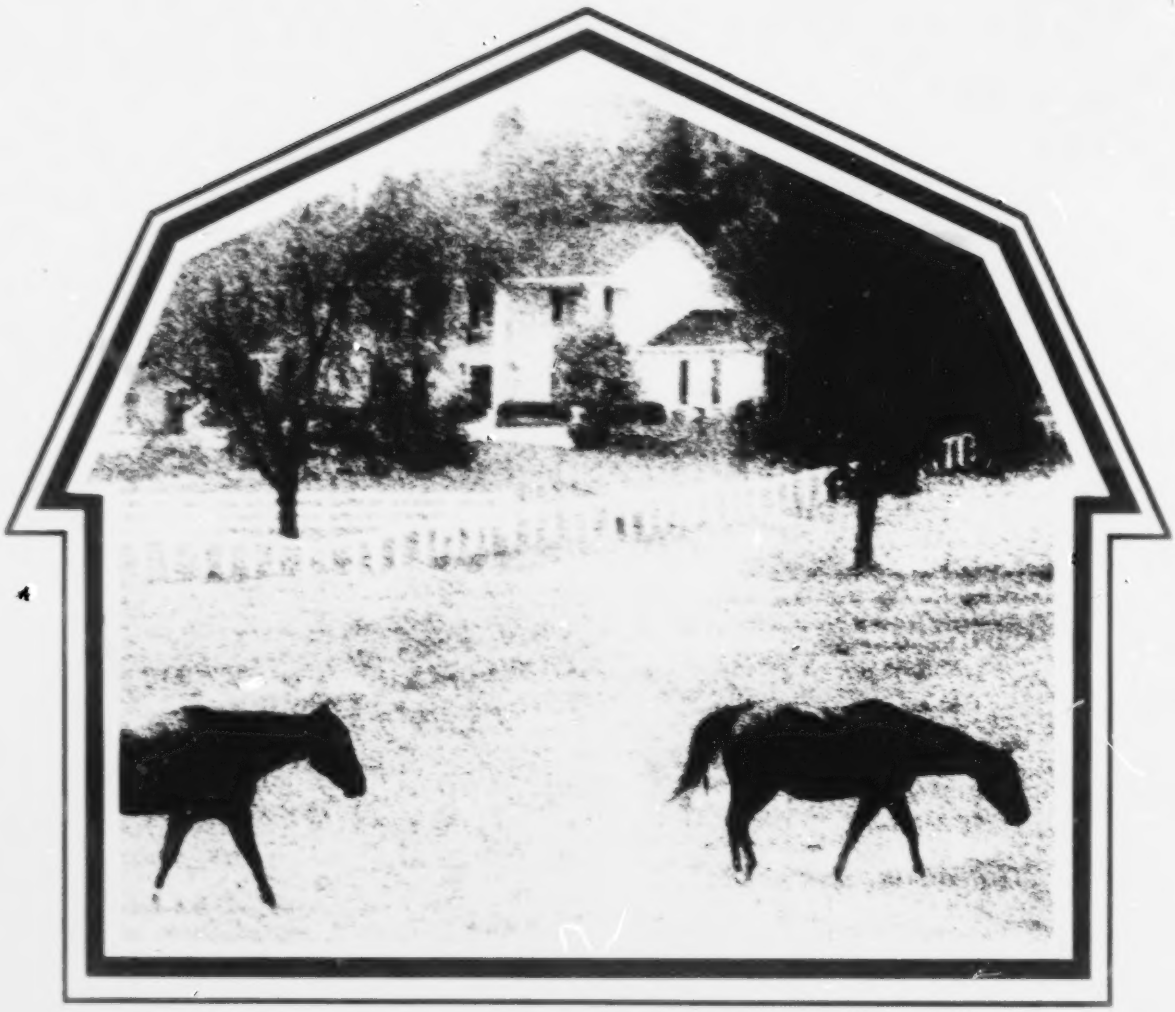
U.S. Department of Commerce
Malcolm Baldrige, Secretary
Clarence J. Brown, Deputy Secretary
D. Bruce Merrifield, Acting Under Secretary
for Economic Affairs

BUREAU OF THE CENSUS
John G. Keane, Director

America's Agriculture

Part-Time Farmers

AG86-PP-3



U.S. Department of Commerce • BUREAU OF THE CENSUS

America's Agriculture

Part-Time Farmers

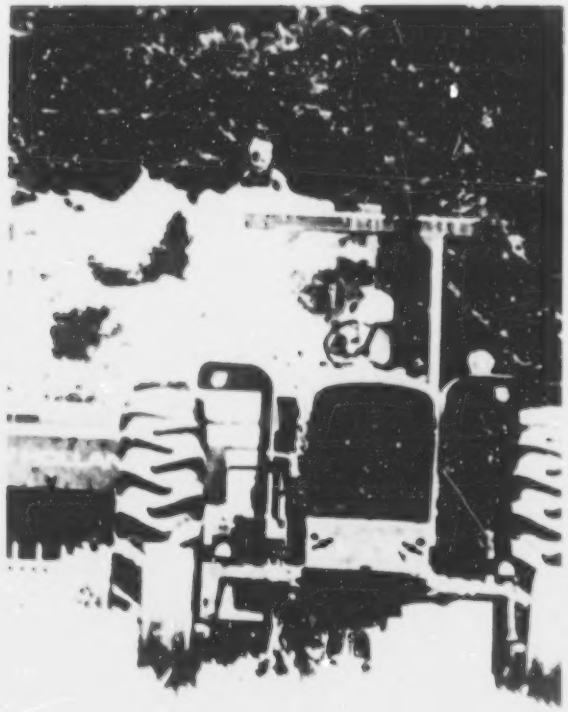
America's 2.2 million farms represent a very diverse industry. About 45 percent of the farms are operated by part-time farmers - those who reported in the 1982 Census of Agriculture that they spent 50 percent or more of their worktime at occupations other than farming.

A growing trend toward part-time farming has developed in recent years. For some it provides a means of maintaining a family tradition of farming. Others rely on it as a supplement to their off-farm income.

Our Part-Time Farmers and Their Farms

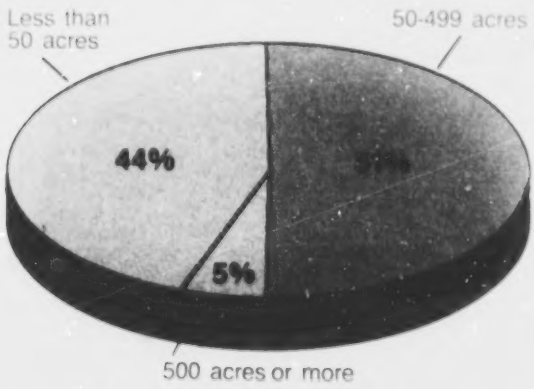
Because of great diversity among the 1 million part-time farmers, it is difficult to characterize the typical part-time farmer. However, results from the most recent census of agriculture show –

- 71% work 200 days or more off the farm
- 72% own all of the land they operate
- 51% have been on their farms 10 years or more
- 97% are white
- 94% are male, and
- Average age is 49



Farm Acres

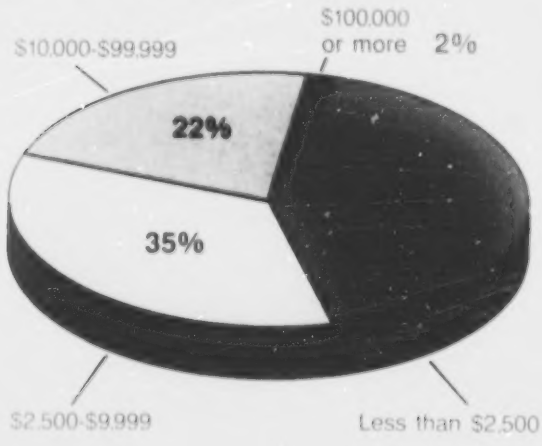
- **Average size of farm is 167 acres**
- **44% are less than 50 acres**



Source: 1982 Census of Agriculture

Farm Product Sales

- **Average sales are $17,256**
- **41% sold less than $2,500**
- **76% sold less than $10,000**



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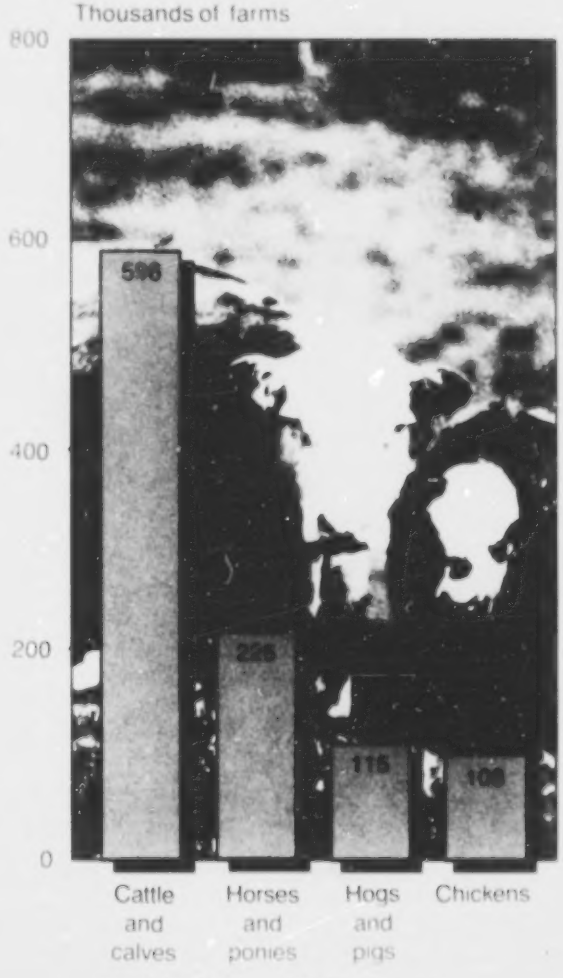
Diversified Farming

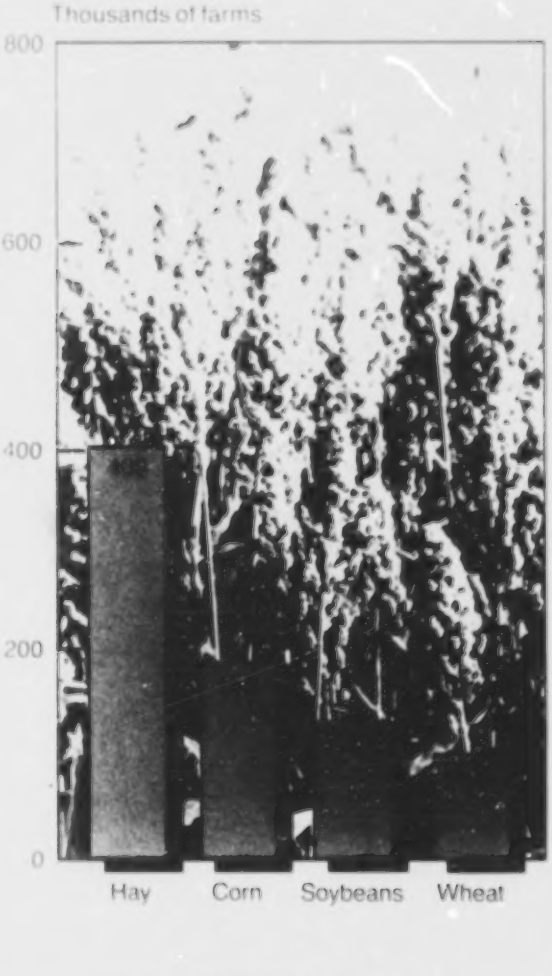
Part-time farmers are involved in every type of farming. However, certain types are more common among part-time farmers. For example, about 60 percent of the part-time farmers reported cattle and calf inventories at the end of 1982. The leading crop was hay which was reported by 41 percent. The charts below show the major types of part-time farming activities.

Livestock Inventories



Source: 1982 Census of Agriculture

Major Crops Harvested

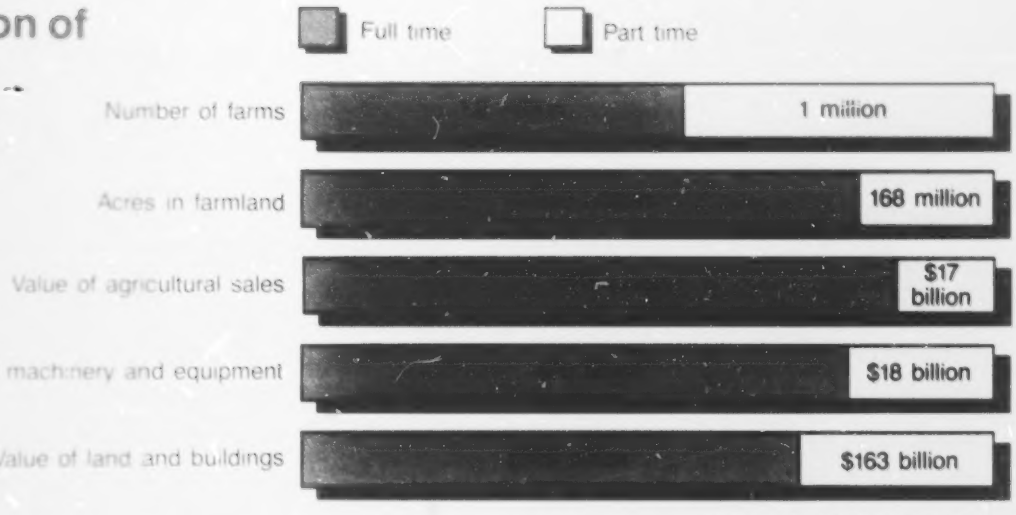


Source: 1982 Census of Agriculture

Full Time vs. Part Time

In 1982 there were nearly as many part-time as full-time farmers. However, a comparison of sales, acreages, inventories, and other items shows that part-time farm operations were on a smaller scale than their full-time counterparts.

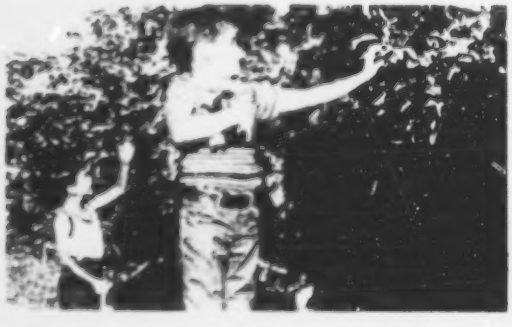
Comparison of Full- and Part-Time Farming

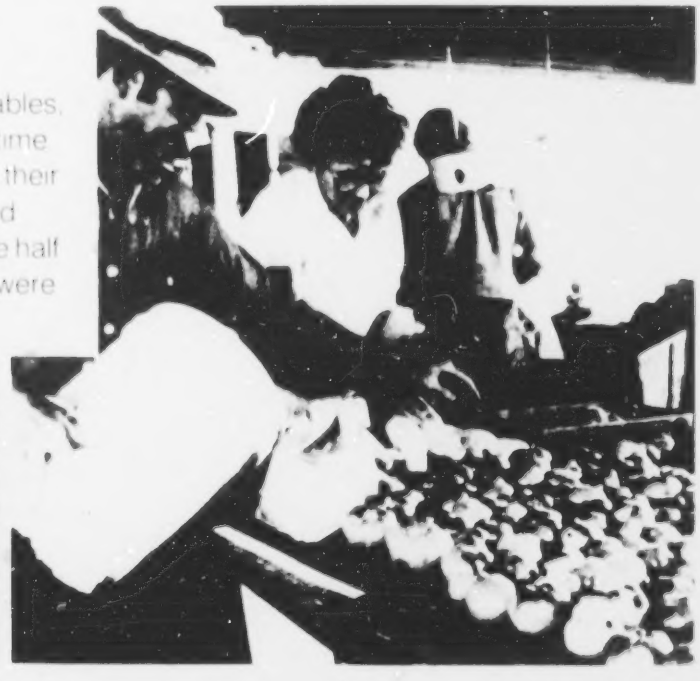


Source: 1982 Census of Agriculture

Farm Fresh

Many Americans enjoy fresh fruits, vegetables, eggs, and other farm products. Our part-time farmers help provide these products from their roadside stands, pick-your-own farms, and farmers' markets. In 1982, more than one half of the farms selling directly to consumers were operated by part-time farmers.





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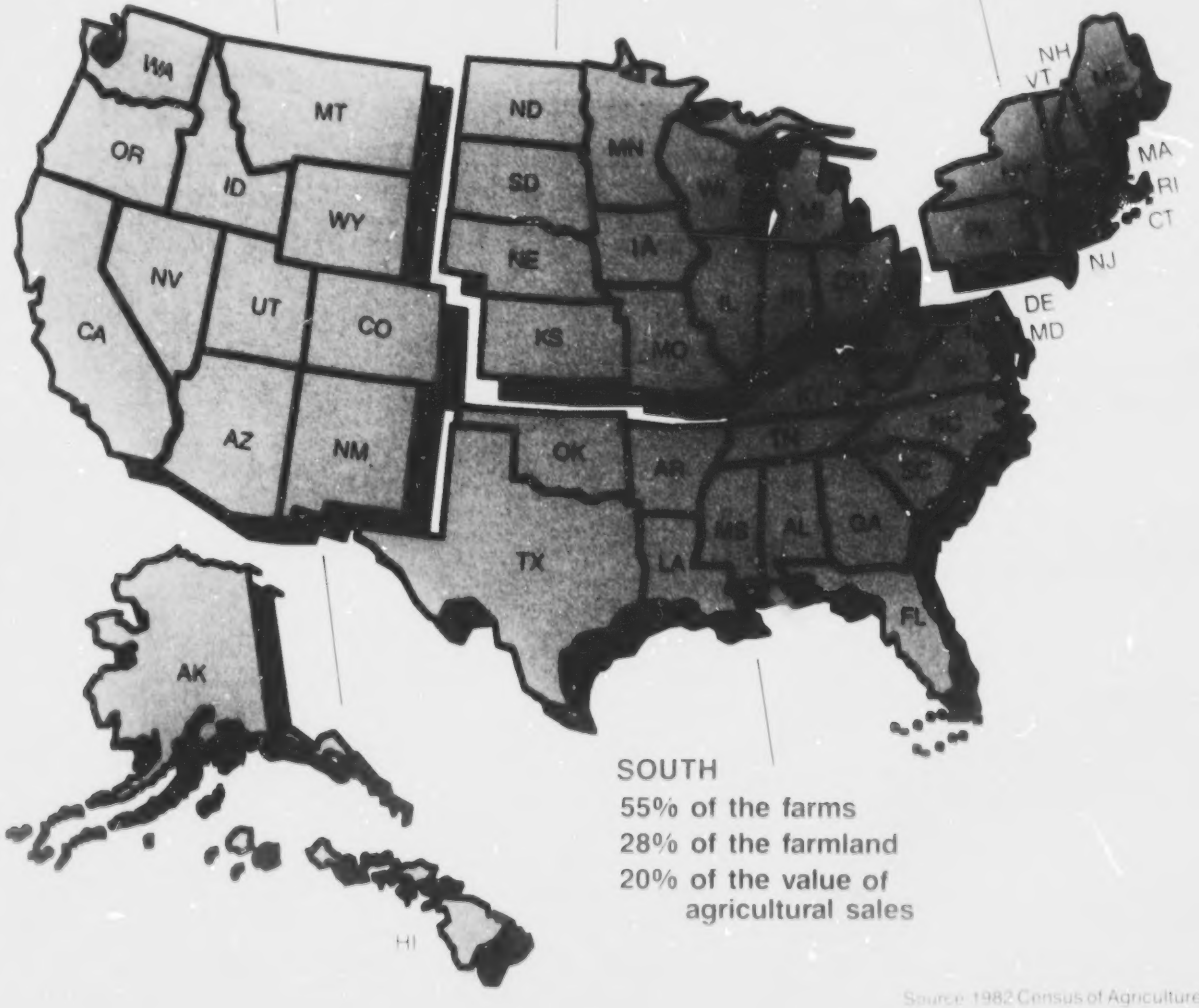
Part-Time Farming Around the Nation

In the four regions, part-time farming represents . . .

WEST
47% of the farms
14% of the farmland
11% of the value of agricultural sales

MIDWEST
35% of the farms
13% of the farmland
11% of the value of agricultural sales

NORTHEAST
43% of the farms
24% of the farmland
10% of the value of agricultural sales



SOUTH
55% of the farms
28% of the farmland
20% of the value of agricultural sales

Source: 1982 Census of Agriculture

1987 Census of Agriculture

results will be available beginning mid-1988. Published reports will be available for all counties, States, and the U.S. and will include data on:

- Number of farms
- Land in farms
- Operator characteristics
- Type of organization
- Land use
- Size of farms
- Market value of agricultural products sold
- Livestock
- Poultry
- Poultry and livestock products
- Crops harvested
- Energy costs
- Production expenditures

Please call (301) 763-1113 for further information.

Census Bureau Mission

Additional Information

Issued May 1987

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Malcolm Baldrige, Secretary
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END

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